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ABSTRACT

In 1983, the Des Moines (Iowa) Schools applied for approval to use the allowable growth funding provided in Senate File 2168 to expand and create additional programs for the prevention of dropping out as well as programs for students who had dropped out but were returning to school. The original proposal included the following: (1) an expansion of services in the Alternative High School; (2) initiation of the School-Within-A-School Program (SWSP) at three comprehensive high schools; and (3) the Dropout/Outreach Project (DOP) as an expansion of the New Horizons Program. During the 1985-86 school year, the SWSP was expanded to all high schools. This was followed by the funding of additional positions at the Alternative High School during 1986-87. During 1987-88, additional expansions were achieved. This evaluation study covers program attendance and dropout rates, enrollment, number of support service contacts, and reenrollment success data. Data are provided for 270 students in the SWSP, 130 students in the DOP, and 45 students in the Alternative Learning Program for Sophomores-To-Be. The total full-time equivalent staff for all of these programs included 30 teachers, program coordinators, counselors, associates, learning coordinators, and social workers. Recommendations are made regarding data collection, amelioration of poor parent participation and high dropout rates at certain locations, reporting of support service data, documentation of counseling activities, and long-range planning. Twelve data tables are included. The SWSP Student Attitude Survey, the DOP One-to-One Structured Interview, and the DOP Training Plan are appended. (TJH)

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REPORT OF EVALUATION

DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS

1987-88

Department of Evaluation, Research and Testing
Des Moines Independent Community School District
1800 Grand Avenue
Des Moines IA 50307-3382

John F. Tompkins
Program Evaluator

Approved by: Morris D. Wilson

Morris D. Wilson, Ph.D.
Director of Evaluation, Research and Testing

December 20, 1988

TM012884

DES MOINES INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT OF EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND TESTING
EVALUATION ABSTRACT

December 20, 1988

PROJECT TITLE: Dropout Prevention Programs
-School-Within-A-School (SWS)
-Alternative Learning Program for Sophomores-To-Be (ALPS)
-Dropout /Outreach Project

COORDINATORS: Randy Gordon (School-Within-A-School)
Ronald Sallade (Dropout/Outreach Project)
Vince Scavo (Alternative Learning Program for Sophomores-To-Be)

STAFF:

School-Within-A-School Program

13.0 Teachers
2.5 SWS Coordinators
2.5 Counselors
1.0 Coordinator

Alps Program

6.0 Teachers
2.0 Associates
1.0 Social Worker

Dropout/Outreach Project

2.0 Learning Coordinators

Total Full Time Equivalent Staff: 30.0

NUMBER OF STUDENTS*:		
	SWS:	270
	Dropout/Outreach:	130
	ALPS:	45
	Total:	445

*The figures reported represent the numbers of students typically served in these programs. Some minor variations were encountered in the number of participants in each program during the course of the school year.

FUNDING:

	TOTAL	SWS/ALPS	DROPOUT/OUTREACH
Budgeted:	$1,160,463.00	$1,056,236.00	$104,227.00
Expended:	$1,150,855.00	$1,053,084.00	$ 97,771.00

Source: Allowable Growth and Local

COMMENTS/CONCLUSIONS:

During the fall semester, School-Within-A School students displayed an attendance rate of 90.8 percent of the days possible. During the spring semester, students displayed an attendance rate of 89.5 percent. District senior high building attendance rates averaged 92.8 percent during the fall and 92.4 percent during the spring semester. This indicates that attendance rates for SWS were less than 3 percent lower

than district building rates during both semesters. As the criterion established specified that SWS students would attend at a rate no more than 5% lower than the attendance for the remainder of the school population, staff should be commended for their efforts in communicating to students the importance of good attendance.

Dropout rates for SWS students were lower than the rates for all building students at 4 of the 5 senior high schools during the first semester and 3 of the 5 senior high schools during the second semester. The SWS Coordinator and the Department of Evaluation, Research and Testing are currently in the process of designing a longitudinal study to collect information on SWS students for an extended period of time after they exit the program. This would encompass such things as dropout information, attendance, number of credits earned, etc.

One hundred percent of the students in the Dropout /Outreach Project were enrolled in a program to complete their high school education at the end of the 1987-88 school year. Of the 130 students, 120 (92.3%) were enrolled in the Alternative High School program, 4 were enrolled in one of the comprehensive high schools and 6 were enrolled in a GED program.

A total of 3,337 "support services contacts" were made by staff of the Dropout /Outreach Project during the 1987-88 school year. While the number of contacts per student was not reported, based on a total of 130 students, each pupil benefited from an average of 26 support services contacts during the course of the year. Support services contacts included home visits, telephone calls to the homes, individual counseling sessions, phone contacts with job supervisors, visits to the job site and staff consultations.

Thirty-five of the 45 ALPS students (77.8%) were scheduled for reenrollment in the tenth grade at one of the comprehensive high schools during the 1988-89 school year surpassing the specified criterion that 75 percent would be reenrolled.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Data on both attendance and dropout rates for SWS students should be reported in comparison to those for only non-program students at the same buildings. This will allow for a more meaningful comparison than comparing data on program students to that for all building students including those in the program.

2. The SWS Coordinator should investigate reasons for and take steps to prevent reoccurrence of a very high student dropout rate at East High School and a low rate of parent involvement at North High School.

3. The Dropout /Outreach Project Coordinator should consider altering the method of reporting support services to indicate the number and types of services provided <u>by student</u> rather than only the total number of times each service was provided.

4. More complete documentation should be submitted for ALPS objectives related particularly to counseling activities and parent involvement in order to better assess impact on students.

5. Long range planning for the district's dropout prevention program should include placing programs such as these under a single umbrella. It would seem that such an action might more effectively promote the district's overall goals for providing service to "at risk students" in the area of dropout prevention. Such action might also serve to prevent the origination of separate and uncoordinated entities all designed with the end goal of dropout prevention. Separate program components could still exist under the umbrella, but these should be tied together by more effective communication and coordination.

A copy of the complete Report of Evaluation for the Dropout Prevention Programs is available upon request from the Department of Evaluation, Research and Testing, 1800 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA.

I PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In 1983, the Des Moines Schools applied for approval to use the allowable growth funding provided in Senate File 2168 to expand and create additional programs for the prevention of dropouts as well as programs for students who had dropped but were returning to school. The original proposal included the following components: (1) an expansion of services in the Alternative High School; (2) initiation of School-Within-A-School Program at three comprehensive high schools; and (3) the Dropout/Outreach Project as an expansion of the New Horizons Program. During the 1985-86 school year, the School-Within-A-School Program was expanded to all high schools. This was followed by the funding of additional positions at the Alternative High School in 1986-87 using allowable growth funds. During 1987-88, the total budget for dropout and dropout prevention programs was increased by about one third. This made possible the support or partial support of the following programs or positions: New Horizons Program; work experience coordinator's position at the Alternative High School; School-Work Linkage Program; and Des Moines Plan reading/writing and mathematics labs in ten middle schools and five senior high schools. The total budget for the 1988-89 school year is $3,906,156.00, which is nearly evenly split between allowable growth and the local budget as funding sources.

The following paragraphs describe the three programs indicated above that were targeted toward dropout prevention and that are included in this evaluation design, namely the Alternative Learning Program for Sophomores To Be (ALPS), the School-Within-A-School Program (SWS) and the Dropout/Outreach Project. In addition to these programs, another $363,531.00 earmarked for dropout prevention was diverted to programs that are a part of The Des Moines Plan, mostly the reading/writing and mathematics lab programs at the middle and senior high school level. Information concerning these funds and the programs they supported is covered in the report of evaluation for The Des Moines Plan, 1987-88.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM FOR SOPHOPMORES TO BE (ALPS)

The ALPS came into being in the fall of 1984 to serve ninth grade dropouts of the Des Moines Public Schools. The program is housed on the second floor of the Alternative High School-south attendance center. The program serves approximately 45 students simultaneously with a staff of six teachers, two associates and one social worker. The stated goal is to return those students that complete the program back to their home high schools as tenth graders. The course offerings include all required ninth grade courses plus several electives. Academically, the ALPS is traditional in structure. It operates on a semester basis, with parent conferences at the midpoint and report cards issued at the close of the semester. Non-traditional aspects of the program are the low pupil-teacher ratio and the shortened school day. Students must be between the ages of 14 and 151/2 years of age at the time of enrollment and have two or fewer credits. They may remain in the program from one to three semesters.

SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL (SWS)

The School-Within-A-School Program serves potential dropout students in all five high schools. The program was initiated at East, Lincoln and North in 1984 and expanded to Hoover and Roosevelt in 1985-86. Approximately 60 students are served in the program at each of three sites, East, Lincoln and North with 45 students each at Hoover and Roosevelt. Total enrollment in the program, therefore, is 270 students. Criteria for admittance to the program includes a comprehensive appraisal of the student (e.g., interviews, tests, attendance and academic records) and consideration of all options in regular and alternative school settings.

All of the programs have the same goal: to help students move toward graduation who are or will be having, problems earning credits. Other features include flexible scheduling, smaller classes, extensive counseling services, career placement, vocational skills training and placement and communication with parents.

DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT

The Dropout/Outreach Project provides a combination of school and work for 130 Des Moines young people who have already dropped out of school. The alternative education offering consists of preemployment training, counseling, employment related instruction, continuation of high school education and supervised work experience. Continuing education was available through the Des Moines comprehensive high schools, Alternative High School and GED programs.

II BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Figures 1and 2 below present budget information for each of the dropout prevention programs. The information contained in these figures was provided by the Controller's Office of the Des Moines Public Schools.

FIGURE 1

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

SWS/ALPS PROGRAMS*

1987-88

Category	Amount Budgeted	Amount Expended
Salaries and Benefits	956,586.00	$956,586.00
Professional/Technical/Eval.	2,800.00	1,490.00
Travel	900.00	740.00
Supplies	10,994.00	9,982.00
Inservice	4,200.00	3,414.00
Equipment	80,756.00	80,872.00
TOTAL	$1,056,236.00	$1,053,084.00

*The Controller's Office indicated that budgets for these two programs were combined.

FIGURE 2

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES
DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT
1987-88

Category	Amount Budgeted	Amount Expended
Salaries and Benefits	$77,111.00	$54,619.00
Student Subsidized Employ.	23,970.00	35,112.00
Supplies	2,500.00	5,159.00
Travel	646.00	608.00
Equipment	.00	2,273.00
TOTAL	104,227.00	97,771.00

III RESULTS OF EVALUATION

Process and performance objectives for each of the three separate projects in the Dropout Prevention Program are treated separately in this report. In this chapter, each objective and its documentation appear in italics followed by an explanation of the evaluation method (if appropriate) and the results of evaluation. Tabled data is included where appropriate. Chapters IV and V contain conclusions and recommendations for the dropout prevention program as a total entity.

SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL (SWS)

Objective II B1

The SWS Coordinator will, with the help of the staff, design and conduct a one day inservice for SWS staff each semester as documented by an agenda on file with the program coordinator.

Results

Agendas submitted by the SWS Coordinator indicated that one day inservice sessions for staff were held on December 9, 1987 and March 7, 1988. The December session included a presentation on "Key Components of Effective Alternative Educational Programs" made by Dr. Ray Morley, Consultant, Department of Education. The afternoon session featured Dr. Sue Donielson, Director of Curriculum, who gave a presentation entitled "Reaching the Unmotivated Learner." The session in March was held in conjunction with the Des Moines Public Schools Inservice Day. During the course of this day, Dr. Bob Barr, Dean of the College of Education at Oregon State University presented five different sessions aimed at teachers and administrators of programs for students at risk. SWS staff were encouraged to attend as many of the five sessions as possible.

Objective III A1

Sixty -five percent of students enrolled for a complete semester in the SWS program will achieve a minimum of 2.0 units of credit as evidenced by records on file with the building registrar.

Evaluation Method

Documentation related to the number of credits earned by SWS students during each semester was provided by the SWS Coordinator by school. This information was obtained from records maintained by each of the building registrars. Tables SWS-1 and SWS-2 below report the number and percent of students at each building that earned 2 or more credits during each semester. Only students who remained in the program for the entire semester are included.

Results

Table SWS-1. Credits Earned by SWS Students, Fall Semester, 1987-88.

School	Number of Students Completing Semester	Number Earning $\geq$2.0 Credits	Percent
East	33	21	63.6
Hoover	41	31	75.6
Lincoln	39	27	69.2
North	33	21	63.6
Roosevelt	41	29	70.7
All Schools	187	129	69.0

Table SWS-2. Credits Earned by SWS Students, Spring Semester, 1987-88.

School	Number of Students Completing Semester	Number Earning ≥2.0 Credits	Percent
East	36	31	86.1
Hoover	38	29	76.3
Lincoln	33	15	45.5
North	46	23	50.0
Roosevelt	41	28	68.3
All Schools	194	126	64.9

As indicated by Table SWS-1, 69.0 percent of the first semester SWS students earned at least two credits during the semester. This exceeded the criterion of 65 percent. The percent of second semester students achieving two or more credits was 64.9, which fell only 0.1 percent below the 65 percent criterion.

The SWS Program Coordinator reported that information on number of credits earned will be maintained for the duration of time that a particular student remains in the SWS Program and for at least one semester following exit. Longitudinal information on students that remain in the program long enough to complete the full cycle (3 semesters) should be more valuable in assessing the program's effects than merely maintaining the data on a semester by semester basis.

Objective III A2

At the conclusion of the semester immediately following exit from the SWS program, 65% of the exited students still enrolled in the same school will earn a minimum of 2.0 units of credit as evidenced by records on file with the building registrar.

Evaluation Method

Documentation was provided by the SWS Coordinator concerning the number of credits earned by students during the semester following their completion of and exit from the program. The information contained in Table SWS-3 pertains to students who completed the program during the spring semester of the 1986-87 school year, while Table SWS-4 applies to students who completed the program during the fall semester of 1987-88.

Results

Table SWS-3. Credits Earned by SWS Students One Semester Following Exit, Fall Semester, 1987-88.

School	Number	Number of Students Earning 2 or More Credits Following Exit	Percent
East	13	8	61.5
Hoover	0	0	0.0
Lincoln	0	0	0.0
North	0	0	0.0
Roosevelt	0	0	0.0
All Schools	13	8	61.5

Table SWS-4. Credits Earned by SWS Students One Semester Following Exit, Spring Sem., 1987-88.

School	Number Exiting	Number of Students Earning 2 or More Credits Following Exit	Percent
East	3	3	100.0
Hoover	0	0	0.0
Lincoln	0	0	0.0
North	6	2	33.3
Roosevelt	5	4	80.0
All Schools	14	9	64.3

According to Tables SWS-3 and SWS-4, 61.5 percent of the students who exited the program at the end of the 1986-87 school year earned at least two credits during the next semester (fall 1987) and 64.3 percent of those who exited the program at the end of the first semester of 1987-88 earned at least two credits in the spring of 1988. These data reflect only students who remained enrolled at the same attendance center during the semester immediately following exit.

Objective III A3

For SWS students completing the semester, average daily attendance will be not more than 5% lower than the attendance for the remainder of the school population as evidenced by records on file with the SWS building coordinator.

Evaluation Method

An attendance percent was computed by calculating days of attendance as a percent of days of possible attendance for SWS students at each buiilding. This was done by building for students who completed each semester in the program. Those who left the program during the course of either semester were not reported. The attendance percent for the entire building (including SWS students) was also computed so that a comparison between SWS and building attendance could be made. Tables SWS-5 and SWS-6 report this comparative information by indicating the attendance percent for each group and the difference between the SWS and building results.

Results

Table SWS-5. Attendance of SWS Students and All Students By Building, Fall Semester, 1987-88.

Building	SWS Attendance Percent	Building Attendance Percent	Difference (SWSBldg %)
East	88.1	91.8	-3.7
Hoover	94.4	94.7	-0.3
Lincoln	92.4	93.4	-1.0
North	89.9	91.4	-1.5
Roosevelt	88.8	93.0	-4.2
All Buildings	90.8	92.8	-2.0

Table SWS-6. Attendance of SWS Students and All Students By Building, Spring Semester, 1987-88.

Building	SWS Attendance Percent	Building Attendance Percent	Difference (SWS-Bldg %)
East	89.4	91.6	-2.2
Hoover	90.0	94.3	-4.3
Lincoln	88.7	92.4	-3.7
North	92.2	91.3	+0.9
Roosevelt	86.6	92.7	-6.1
All Buildings	89.5	92.4	-2.9

Objective III A3 states as a criterion that the percent of attendance for SWS students will be no more than 5 percent less than that for each building. As indicated by Tables SWS-5 and SWS-6, the attendance of SWS students met this criteria at all buildings during both semesters with the exception of Roosevelt High School during the second semester. At this attendance center, the SWS attendance percent during the spring semester fell 6.1 below the percent for the total building. It should be noted that at North High School during the second semester, the SWS attendance percent was actually higher than the attendance percent for the total building.

The SWS Coordinator may wish to consider a revision in the summary data submitted to allow for the comparison in attendance percent to be made between SWS and non-SWS students at each building rather than between SWS students and the entire building enrollment including SWS. The objective as stated suggests that such a comparison be made between SWS students and "the remainder of the population." This comparison would be more meaningful though it should be noted that the number of SWS students enrolled at a building is small enough that either their inclusion or deletion would not likely significantly change the building attendance rate.

The results above would seem to indicate that the SWS staff should be commended for their efforts in communicating to students the importance of a good attendance record.

Objective III A4

Near the end of the program year, 75% or more of a 10% random sample of SWS students will respond positively to the program by marking no more than two items "disagree" as measured by their responses to a one-to-one structured interview conducted by the Department of Evaluation and the SWS Program Coordinator.

Evaluation Method

The School-Within- A-School Student Attitude Survey was administered to a ten percent random sample selected from the total population of participating students in May of 1988. A copy of this instrument appears in Appendix A. The survey contains 20 items that ask students to mark whether they agree, are neutral or disagree with statements about their attitude toward the SWS program. Three of the items on the survey are worded so that a "positive" response is indicated by disagreement with the statement. Positive responses to the remaining seventeen items are indicated by agreement with the statements. The survey was administered as a one-to-one interview with a 10 percent sample of students in the program by the SWS Coordinator during May of 1988.

Results

The SWS Coordinator submitted completed surveys for twenty students. Eighteen of the surveys (90%) contained no more than two responses in the negative category. This surpasses the criterion indicated by the objective that 75% would make no more than two negative responses.

Objective III A5

All of the students completing a semester in SWS shall have determined or reviewed their personal vocational goals in a conference with the SWS Counselor as documented by a list of student names and corresponding individual vocational goals on file with the SWS Counselor.

Results

Individual vocational goals were listed for each SWS student enrolled for a full semester . Documentation consisted of the title of an occupation that the student indicated interest in pursuing. This title was reported on the SWS data collection sheet adjacent to the name of each student. It is assumed that in several instances where an occupational title was not listed, the student had simply not

indicated an area of interest at this time. The SWS Coordinator reported that each SWS Counselor visits with program students at sometime during the year about vocational interests as part of the counseling process.

Objective III A6

The dropout rate for SWS students will be equal to or lower than the rate for all ninth graders at the high school in which the program is located as documented by the building SWS Coordinator each semester.

Evaluation Method

The SWS Coordinator reported the percentage of students enrolled in the SWS program that dropped from school during each semester. This was compared to the percentage of all ninth grade students at each attendance center that dropped from school during each semester. The ninth grade student population was used as a standard for comparison as the majority of the SWS enrollment is composed of ninth grade students. Table SWS-7 indicates the comparison in dropout percentages for SWS and all ninth grade students by building.

Results

Table SWS-7. Dropout Rates for SWS/All Students by Attendance Center, Fall/Spring Semesters, 1987-88.

Building	Fall Semester Dropout Percentages			SpringSemesterDropout Percentages		
	SWS	All 9th Grade	Difference	SWS	All 9th Grade	Difference
East	17.5	19.0	+1.5	39.0	20.0	-19.0
Hoover	2.4	6.2	+3.8	2.6	5.8	+3.2
Lincoln	15.2	10.0	-5.2	8.3	12.9	+4.6
North	19.5	23.1	+3.6	17.9	28.4	+8.5
Roosevelt	6.8	13.3	+6.5	16.0	8.0	-8.0

During the first semester, the percent of SWS students who dropped was lower than the percent of all 9th grade students who dropped at East, Hoover, North and Roosevelt High Schools. The SWS drop rate at Lincoln High School was slightly higher than the building 9th grade average. During the second semester, the SWS dropout rate was lower than the building 9th grade rate at Hoover, Lincoln and North and higher than the building rate at East and Roosevelt.

It is recommended that the SWS Coordinator take steps to revise this objective so that the dropout rate for SWS students is being compared to that of non-SWS students rather than all ninth grade students at the same building. As specified, the objective does not stipulate removing the enrollment records of the SWS students when calculating the building rate. Steps should also be taken to investigate the reasons for the extremely high percentage of dropouts at East High during the spring semester. According to the data submitted, 39 percent of those who started the program had dropped by the end of the semester.

Objective IV B1

The SWS Counselor/Coordinator will meet or speak with 80% of the parents (or parent substitutes) of first semester SWS students at some time during the semester as documented by a log kept by the SWS Counselor/coordinator.

Results

Records of parent contacts were maintained by each SWS Counselor and recorded on the SWS data collection form. Objective IV B1 states that 80 percent of the parents or parent substitutes of students will be contacted by the counselor during the first semester that the student enrolls in the program. Records submitted indicated that 112 students were served for the first time in the fall of 1987. Parents of 104 or 92.9 percent of these students were contacted. During the spring semester, parents of 54 or 73.0 percent of the 74 new students were contacted. The criterion of 80 percent was reached or exceeded at all buildings with the exception of North High School . At this building, parents of 33.3 percent of the new students during the first semester were contacted and parents of 45.4 percent of the new students

during the second semester were contacted. As the percent of parents that were contacted at North falls considerably below the criterion, it is recommended that the SWS Coordinator take steps necessary to increase the communication with parents of students at this attendance center.

Objective IV B2

The SWS Counselor shall recruit students for the program such that by thirty days after the beginning of the semester the program will be at least 90% of capacity as documented by a list of student names and student numbers on file with the building SWS Coordinator.

Results

The SWS Program may enroll a maximum of 60 students at East, Lincoln and North High Schools and 45 students at Hoover and Roosevelt. Table SWS-8 indicates enrollment information for each attendance center during each semester.

Table SWS-8. SWS Enrollment By Semester, 1987-88.

Building	Fall Semester		Spring Semester	
	90% Capacity	Actual Enrl.	90% Capacity	Actual Enrl.
East	54	40	54	61
Hoover	40	42	40	40
Lincoln	54	46	54	40
North	54	42	54	58
Roosevelt	40	47	40	53
TOTAL	242	217	242	252

Enrollment that is 90 percent of capacity would be indicated by the participation of 54 students at East, Lincoln and North and 40 students at Hoover and Roosevelt. During the fall semester, enrollments within the first thirty days ranged from 40 at East to 47 at Roosevelt. During the spring semester, enrollments ranged from 40 at Hoover to 61 at East High. The enrollment figures indicate that during the fall, only Hoover and Roosevelt had enrolled the number of students sufficient to meet the 90 percent capacity criterion. In the spring, however, all buildings with the exception of Lincoln met the criterion.

DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT

Objective III A1

At the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year, 90 percent of the youth participating in the Dropout/Outreach Project will be enrolled in programs to complete their high school education as evidenced by project records on file with the learning coordinators as documented by enrollment records on file with the Dropout/Outreach Project which include students sorted by educational program.

Results

There are three alternatives available for a student to pursue in order to complete the high school educational program. They include: (1) reenrollment in one of the five comprehensive high schools; (2) enrollment in the Alternative High School; or (3) enrollment in a G.E. D. program. There were 130 enrollees in the Dropout/Outreach Project during the 1987-88 school year. Table DO-1 below shows the number of students at each center that exercised the various options available.

Table DO-1. Participation in Educational Programs to Complete High School, Dropout/Outreach Project, 1987-88.

Center	Educational Program			
	Alternative High School	Comprehensive High School	G.E.D.	Total
North Center	61	2	5	68
South Center	59	2	1	62
Total	120	4	6	130

As shown by Table DO-1, all 130 students in the Dropout/Outreach Project were enrolled in a high school program. These results indicate that the program is surpassing the stated criterion which indicates that 90 percent of the students will be enrolled in a program to complete high school.

Objective III A2

At the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year, 80 percent of the youth participating in the Dropout/Outreach Project will have had either subsidized or unsubsidized part-time employment as evidenced by records on file with the learning coordinators .

Results

Of the 130 students in the program, there were 92 subsidized public sector job placements and 15 unsubsidized private sector job placements. This resulted in the placement of 107 or 82.3 percent of the students thereby surpassing the 80 percent placement criterion established in this objective. It should be noted that the amount of funds available is a variable that exerts a degree of control over the number of placements that can be made, a factor that could ultimately determine whether or not this particular objective is attained.

Objective III A3

At the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year, 60 percent of the young people participating in the Dropout/Outreach Project who completed their high school education during that time will have secured unsubsidized employment as evidenced by records on file with the learning coordinators.

Results

Four individuals completed their high school education through the Dropout/Outreach Project during the 1987-88 school year. Two (50%) of these secured unsubsidized employment, one with EmCo Manufacturing, the other with the U.S. Navy. One additional student that graduated reported that employment would be sought following adoption of a child.

Objective III A4

Eighty-five percent of Dropout/Outreach Project work experience youth shall achieve ratings which are at least "average" (one or two) on a three point scale in the areas of work performance and employability attitudes as evidenced by the Job Supervisor's Rating Scale which will be completed bi-weekly by their job supervisor as documented by presence of the completed rarting scales in the project office.

Evaluation Method

Supervisors of employed students completed a Job Supervisor's Rating Scale bi-weekly. Specific

categories rated included the following: performance, attendance, attitude, dependability, following instructions, initiative, personal appearance, quality of work, speed of performance, work organization habits, working relationships with others, punctuality, courtesy, and cooperation with job supervisor.

Results

Of the 86 students who were rated during the 1987-88 school year, 83 (96.5%) had composite ratings which were at least "average" as defined by the scale. Two students (2.3%) had ratings which were "below average" while the composite rating for one student (1.2%) was "neutral." The percentage of positive responses for each of the categories listed above ranged from 85% for "attendance" to 97% for "personal appearance."

Objective III A5

Near the end of the program year, 75 percent or more of Dropout/Outreach Project students will respond positively to the project by marking no more than two items "disagree" or "strongly disagree" as measured by their responses to a one-to-one structured interview.

Evaluation Method

The one-to-one interview contained nineteen statements covering various aspects of the Dropout/Outreach Project. A copy of the interview form appears in Appendix B. The interview included several negatively worded statements in order to discourage the tendency to respond consistently without considering the statement. Students responses are rated as follows: "strongly agree"= +3; "agree"= +1; "neutral" = 0; "disagree" = -1; "strongly disagree" = -3. The highest attainable score, therefore was +3 and the lowest attainable score was -3.

Results

Seventy-five students were interviewed in order to document this objective. All students made "positive responses" that ranged from +.47 to +3.00. Students responded most positively to questions related to the importance of their jobs, their learning coordinator being available to help them with problems and feeling secure about getting a job. They were least positive about learning new skills on the job, the influence of the Dropout/Outreach Project in their decision to return to school and discussing serious problems with their learning coordinator.

Objective III A6

At the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year, 95 percent of the youth participating in the Dropout/Outreach Project will have established written personal/social goals, both short-term and long-term, and will have periodically reviewed their progress toward meeting these goals and will have updated these goals as evidenced by records on file with the learning coordinators.

Results

The Dropout/Outreach Project learning coordinators reported that all enrollees established written personal/social goals which were periodically reviewed and updated. This exceeds the criterion of 95 percent of the students accomplishing this activity as specified in the objective.

Objective IV B1

Throughout the project year, the learning coordinators will provide supportive services other than those associated with the development of learning plans such as visits to job sites and homes and consultations with non-project staff as evidenced by monthly supportive service reporting forms on file with the New Horizons Supervisor.

Evaluation Method

Each of the learning coordinators submitted a report which identified the number of support services provided to students on a monthly basis. Support services could include any of the following: home contacts by telephone, home visits, individual counseling sessions, job supervisor contacts by telephone, personal visit to the job site and consultation with non-project staff. Table DO-2 indicates the number of contacts by center that occurred in these categories during the 1987-88 school year.

Results

Table DO-2. Support Services Contacts By Attendance Center, 1987-88.

Center	Home Contact	Home Visit	Individual Counseling Session	Job Supvervisor Contact	Job Supv. Visit	Staff Consult.	Total
North Cntr.	98	19	991	27	201	42	1378
South Cntr.	360	4	1124	339	12	120	1959
TOTAL	458	23	2115	366	213	162	3337

As indicated by Table DO-2, there were a total of 3,337 supportive service contacts made during the 1987-88 school year. Based on a total of 130 students, each student benefited from an average of 26 supportive service contacts during the course of the school year. Given that there would be considerable variation in the number of contacts among students, it is suggested that the administration of this program consider reporting the number and percent of students who received a specified number of support services during the year. This objective could be modified to reflect this type of documentation.

Objective IV B2

Throughout the project year, the learning coordinators will secure an employment agreement and write a training plan with each young person for each job on which he/she is placed as evidenced by project records on file with learning coordinators.

Results

Learning coordinators secured employment agreements and prepared training plans for 100% of the individuals placed on jobs. Both documents were on file in the Dropout/Outreach Project office. Appendix C contains a copy of the form used to record the training plan for each individual.

Objective IV B3

Throughout the project year, the learning coordinators will identify employment positions and maintain work experience placements as funding permits as evidenced by project records on file with the New Horizons Supervisor.

Results

Funding permitted the placement of 107 students in either subsidized or unsubsidized employment. This represented 82 percent of the 130 individuals who participated in the program. Of the 107 placements, 92 (86.0%) involved subsidized placement, while 15 (14%) involved unsubsidized placement.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM FOR SOPHOMORES TO BE (ALPS) PROGRAM

Objective III A1

At the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year, 75% of the students enrolled in ALPS will be reenrolled in a Des Moines Public School District comprehensive high school, as documented by completed transfer forms on file in the lead teacher's office.

Results

According to records submitted by the lead teacher, 35 of the 45 students who participated in the ALPS Program during 1987-88 were to be scheduled for reenrollment in one of the comprehensive high schools for the fall 1988 semester. This represents 77.8 percent of the program's enrollment thereby achieving the objective.

Objective III A2

During the 1987-88 school year, 100% of the students enrolled in ALPS will be enrolled in three required courses plus electives as documented by enrollment records on file in the lead teacher's office.

Results

All ALPS students were enrolled in the three courses that are required as part of the district's ninth grade curriculum. The remainder of each student's schedule was filled by enrollment in two elective courses.

Objective III A3

During the 1987-88 school year, 100% of the students enrolled in ALPS will be involved in individual and group counseling activities to further self concept as evidenced by attendance records of counseling groups and a record of completed counseling activities on file with the teacher/advisors.

Results

Each student in ALPS is assigned to a person who functions as a teacher/advisor. At various times, the teacher/advisors met with students on an individual or group basis for counseling on a variety of topics. While records indicated that all students in the program were involved in the counseling sessions, further information concerning the number of sessions and the dates on which they occurred was not provided. It is recommended that this type of documentation be maintained and submitted in order to properly verify the occurrence of such activities. At the minimum, the information should for group counseling sessions

consist of a list of the dates of the sessions and topics covered. For individual sessions, documentation should indicate the date(s) of occurrence for each student.

Objective III A4

During the 1987-88 school year, 50% of the students enrolled in ALPS will complete a career education course as documented by credit recorded on student transcripts on file with the lead teacher.

Results

Of the 45 students in ALPS, 11 or 24.4 percent completed a career education course, thereby failing to attain the criterion established that 50 percent should complete such a course. It would seem from this result that increased emphasis should be placed upon encouraging students to enroll and successfully complete this course.

Objective VII B1

During the 1987-88 school year, 100% of the parents of students enrolled in ALPS will be involved in the educational program of their children through the enrollment interview, parent-teacher conferences, home visits and phone calls as documented by written records of the above on file with the teacher-advisor.

Results

Documentation maintained by teacher/advisors revealed that parents of all ALPS students enrolled during 1987-88 were contacted but did not reveal the nature of the contact or the number of times such contact occurred. As an enrollment interview with parents is required in order for a student to enter ALPS, the stated criterion criterion would be achieved with the occurrence of this activity alone. It is recommended that the objective be revised to specify the occurrence of parent involvement in addition to the enrollment interview. Records would then need to be maintained and submitted to indicate the dates and types of contact with parents of each student. In making this recommendation, it is assumed that the desire of the program is to maintain the involvement of parents throughout a student's tenure in this program.

IV COMMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

During the fall semester, School-Within-A School students displayed an attendance rate of 90.8 percent of the days possible. During the spring semester, students displayed an attendance rate of 89.5 percent. District senior high building attendance rates averaged 92.8 percent during the fall and 92.4 percent during the spring semester. This indicates that attendance rates for SWS were less than 3 percent lower than district building rates during both semesters. As the criterion established specified that SWS students would attend at a rate no more than 5% lower than the attendance for the remainder of the school population, staff should be commended for their efforts in communicating to students the importance of good attendance.

Dropout rates for SWS students were lower than the rates for all building students at 4 of the 5 senior high schools during the first semester and 3 of the 5 senior high schools during the second semester. The SWS Coordinator and the Department of Evaluation, Research and Testing is currently in the process of designing a longitudinal study to collect information on SWS students for an extended period of time after they exit the program. This would encompass such things as dropout information, attendance, number of credits earned, etc.

One hundred percent of the students in the Dropout/Outreach Project were enrolled in a program to complete their high school education at the end of the 1987-88 school year. Of the 130 students, 120 (92.3%) were enrolled in the Alternative High School program, 4 were enrolled in one of the comprehensive high schools and 6 were enrolled in a GED program.

A total of 3,337 "support services contacts" were made by staff of the Dropout /Outreach Project during the 1987-88 school year. While the number of contacts per student was not reported, based on a total of 130 students, each pupil benefited from an average of 26 support services contacts during the course of the year. Support services contacts included home visits, telephone calls to the homes, individual counseling sessions, phone contacts with job supervisors, visits to the job site and staff consultations.

Thirty-five of the 45 ALPS students (77.8%) were scheduled for reenrollment in the tenth grade at one of the comprehensive high schools during the 1988-89 school year surpassing the specified criterion that 75 percent would be reenrolled.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Data on both attendance and dropout rates for SWS students should be reported in comparison to those for only non-program students at the same buildings. This will allow for a more meaningful comparison than comparing data on program students to that for all building students including those in the program.

2. The SWS Coordinator should investigate reasons for and take steps to prevent reoccurence of a very high student dropout rate from the program at East High School and a low rate of parent involvement at North High School.

3. The Dropout /Outreach Project Coordinator should consider altering the method of reporting support services to indicate the number and types of services provided by student rather than only the total number of times that each service was provided.

4. More complete documentation should be submitted for ALPS objectives related particularly to counseling activities and parent involvement in order to better assess impact on students.

5. Long range planning for the district's dropout prevention program should include placing programs such as these under a single umbrella. It would seem that such an action might more effectively promote the district's overall goals for providing service to "at risk students" in the area of dropout prevention. Such action might also serve to prevent the origination of separate and uncoordinated entities all designed with the end goal of dropout prevention. Separate program components could still exist under the umbrella, but these should be tied together by more effective communication and coordination.

APPENDIX A

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY
SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

School Within A School Student Attitude Survey

School _____ Student # _____ Date _____
Interviewer _____ Semester in SWS _____

Agree-N-Disagree

_____ 1. I have a good attitude toward the SWS program.
_____ 2. Since I have been in SWS I feel that when I tell someone I am going to do something, I am more likely to do it.
_____ 3. My teachers still don't give me the respect I deserve.
_____ 4. My school attendance has improveed since I have been in SWS.
_____ 5. I feel alright about having my friends know that I am in SWS.
_____ 6. If I am in SWS next year, I would like to have a job.
_____ 7. The SWS program has encouraged me to be more responsible.
_____ 8. I respect my teachers more since I have been in SWS.
_____ 9. My SWS counselor does not seem interested in me.
_____ 10. Since I have been in SWS, I feel that it is more important to be in school everyday.
_____ 11. My SWS counselor has helped me work out problems at school.
_____ 12. My SWS counselor will help me get a job.
_____ 13. I don't feel that anyone can help me if I have problems at school.
_____ 14. The school work that I am doing now will help me later in life.
_____ 15. I feel that I would not be doing as well in school if I had not had help from my SWS teachers.
_____ 16. Since I have been in SWS classes, I have been more successful with my school work.
_____ 17. If I have a serious problem at school, I feel I could talk to my SWS counselor or teachers.
_____ 18. Since being in SWS I feel more like I will graduate from high school.
_____ 19. My SWS teachers expect me to do well in my classes.
_____ 20. My SWS counselor believes I can make good decisions.

APPENDIX B

ONE-TO-ONE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
DROPOUT OUTREACH PROJECT

DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT
One-to-One Interview

udent's Name _____ Educational Program _____

earning Coordinator _____ Date _____

Age_____ Sex_____

Attitude Scale

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1. I feel that being a part of the Dropout/Outreach Project is important to my future.	____	____	____	____	____
2. If I have a serious problem on the job or at school, I talk with my learning coordinator.	____	____	____	____	____
3. I like my Dropout/Outreach job.	____	____	____	____	____
4. I am not learning any new skills on the job I'm in.	____	____	____	____	____
5. I feel that I show an improved acceptance of responsibility by reporting to work regularly and on time.	____	____	____	____	____
6. I am still insecure about getting a job.	____	____	____	____	____
7. The Dropout/Outreach Project has been important in my decision to complete my high school education.	____	____	____	____	____
8. I feel that I show an improved acceptance of responsibility by attending school regularly.	____	____	____	____	____
9. I still don't think anyone would want to hire me.	____	____	____	____	____

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
10. It was my intention to complete my high school education even before I became involved in the Dropout/Outreach Project.	____	____	____	____	____
11. Since being enrolled in the Dropout/Outreach Project, I feel that I am more knowledgeable about how to hold a job.	____	____	____	____	____
12. My learning coordinator has helped me begin an educational program.	____	____	____	____	____
13. My learning coordinator has helped me find a job.	____	____	____	____	____
14. My learning coordinator is usually too busy to help me with problems.	____	____	____	____	____
15. My learning coordinator has been helpful in counseling with me to determine my career goals.	____	____	____	____	____
16. My Dropout/Outreach job is a waste of time.	____	____	____	____	____
17. The skills that I have learned on the job will be useful to me in the future.	____	____	____	____	____
18. My learning coordinator is always available to talk with me.	____	____	____	____	____
19. My learning coordinator has been helpful in counseling with me to determine my educational goals.	____	____	____	____	____

N YOU TELL ME TWO THINGS YOU HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF THE DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT
AT HAVE HELPED YOU THE MOST?

: THERE ANY THINGS THAT YOU DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT THE DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT?

APPENDIX C

TRAINING PLAN
DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT

Appendix A

DROPOUT/OUTREACH PROJECT

Training Plan

Student's Name _____ Learning Coordinator _____

Company _____ Address _____

Telephone _____ Contact Person _____ Supervisor _____

Starting Date _____ Ending Date _____ Hours _____ Days _____

Special Comments _____

DIRECTIONS: Please indicate the progress this student is making in the specific areas by writing the current date in the appropriate column.

SPECIFIC SKILLS TO BE LEARNED	HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED IN SKILL AND IS LEARNING SKILL				NEEDS ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION TO LEARN SKILL				HAS LEARNED SKILL			
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P1	P2	P3	P4